



NOAA Teacher at Sea
Karolyn Braun
Onboard NOAA Ship KA'IMIMOANA
October 6 – 28, 2006

NOAA Teacher at Sea: Karolyn Braun
NOAA Ship KA'IMIMOANA
Mission: TAO Buoy Array Maintenance
Monday, October 30, 2006

Plan of the Day

Transit to Kwajalein, RMI

Well, we are on our third day of overcast and rain. Our sailing path has taken us into the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ). The ITCZ is an area of low pressure that forms where the Northeast Trade Winds meet the Southeast Trade Winds near the earth's equator. As these winds converge, moist air is forced upward. This causes water vapor to condense, or be "squeezed" out, as the air cools and rises, resulting in a band of heavy precipitation around the globe. This band moves seasonally, always being drawn toward the area of most intense solar heating, or warmest surface temperatures. It moves toward the Southern Hemisphere from September through February and reverses direction as the Northern Hemisphere warms during its summer that occurs in the middle of the calendar year. However, the ITCZ is less mobile over the oceanic longitudes, where it holds a stationary position just north of the equator. In these areas, the rain simply intensifies with increased solar heating and diminishes as the sun moves away. An exception to this rule occurs when there is an ENSO event, during which the ITCZ is deflected toward unusually warm sea surface temperatures in the tropical Pacific.

So what else did I do today...well I will tell you! The morning I spent creating a Halloween costume out of duct tape, line, painter's tape and rags from the Bosun's locker. It sounds a bit odd I know but it will all come together! After lunch, the afternoon was full of fire drill and abandoned ship drill excitement. During the fire drill, the scenario was that a fire broke out in the aft steering access tunnel. As scientists, we assist the officers in closing vents and act as runners for DC central, Damage Control. Patrick and I had to



TAS Braun suits up in fire gear.

carry 5-gallon barrels of fire-fighting foam around the ship to the fire fighters, and we



Crewmembers enjoy a game night on the KA'IMIMOANA.

had to fetch air tanks as the fire reflash. Very crazy stuff. When the drill was suspended, the fire fighters were wet head to toe from sweat, shaky and drained from the adrenaline that was flowing through them. At the days end, and after a little air drying, I was able to try one of the fire suits on and got a hint of what they go through during a drill or a real fire. The suit was heavy and hot and that was before I had the

tanks, mask and helmet on. I applaud anyone who has had the privilege to call himself

or herself a firefighter. That evening I made a Happy Halloween banner I hung in the mess while some of the others continued on with game night!